

APPEAL

By the Committee of the Christian Union of Palestine

Addressed To

All World Religious and Political Bodies

Published by

THE ARAB HIGHER COMMITTEE DELEGATION
FOR PALESTINE

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Leaders of All Christian Churches in Palestine Denounce Partition and Demand Arab Independence for the Holy Land

Eleven Christian Denominations Show Solidarity with Moslems

THERE are 142,000 Christian Arabs in Palestine. These, with the Christians of surrounding Arab countries—totalling altogether some two and a half millions—have consistently and vehemently opposed Zionism from the earliest days, in some cases before the Balfour Declaration was made in 1917. The Arab Christians are one with their Moslem compatriots in the demand for the independence of Palestine as a unitary, democratic State. Both Moslems and Christians have pinned their hopes in Palestine and elsewhere on the same moral principles which are honored by Christianity and Islam alike—justice, liberty, self-determination, the Golden Rule.

In their national struggle for the independence and liberation of their country Moslems and Christians of Palestine worked side by side. Christian Bishops and religious dignitaries always condemned the Zionist invasion of Palestine and pointed to the dangers of the hordes of the Godless Zionists to Christianity and the Christian holy places. As early as 1920 the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem denounced these Zionists in a speech in the British House of Lords, later published in the *Church Times*, London, in which he said:

"The Zionist Commission had been a very strong body; but it was not strong enough to control all its members, many of whom were extremists. . . . They had behaved and spoken as if the country had already been given to them and was theirs to dispose of as they would. *In ordinary conversation among Zionists at Jerusalem it had been asked, 'What shall be done with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre? Shall it be burned or razed to the ground?'*"

The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, the late Monseigneur Louis Parlasina, head of the Catholic Church in Palestine for 30 years, never ceased, until he passed away last year, to struggle against this Zionist danger to the Holy Land.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and the Orient on the 20th of December, 1947, issued a statement calling upon the Greek Orthodox Church to help the Arabs in a fight "for Christianity and Islam" against the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. He proclaimed December 21st as a day of prayer for "asking the Almighty to grant to our warriors strength and victory over the forces of evil and to preserve for Christianity and Islam the Holy Land, in whose defense and preservation our lives should be sacrificed."

Although heads of Christian Churches worked individually, this is the first time eleven Christian churches and denominations in Palestine have come together and issued an Appeal addressed to the conscience of humanity at large. Americans, no matter what their faith, even Jews who put moral considerations and the love of their country, America, above their separatist political aspirations, cannot ignore the moral fervor and earnest tone of this important appeal. The statement of the eleven representatives of the Christian communities of Palestine follows:

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The Committee of The Christian Union of Palestine

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The painful and regrettable situation now prevailing in Palestine has prompted representatives of all Christian Communities of the various denominations to hold a joint meeting for the purpose of discussing the abnormal position which the country has reached, realizing, as they did, their responsibilities towards members of their respective communities, spiritually, morally and materially. The meeting was attended by representatives of:

The Orthodox Patriarchate,
The Latin Patriarchate,
The Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate,
The Custodian de Terra Sancta,
The Coptic Patriarchate,
The Vicar of the Melkite Patriarchate,
Metropolitan of the Syriac Orthodox Community,
The Vicar of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate,
The Arab Evangelical Episcopal Community,
The Vicar of the Syriac Catholic Patriarchate,
The Arab Lutheran Community in Palestine.

Having given careful consideration to the situation now prevailing in Palestine, they decided to address this statement to all world religious and political bodies, in which they seek to give expression to their deep sorrow and strong indignation at the lamentable situation in which the Holy Land, the cradle of peace, has been placed as a direct result of the erroneous policy which has been imposed on the country and which has culminated in the partition plan.

It is our firm conviction that peace will not be restored nor would any endeavours made for the promotion of the "peace of Jerusalem" be crowned with success unless those bodies who undertake the determination of the future of Palestine would remove the causes which had made a battlefield of the Holy Land, reestablish the principles of justice and maintain the right of self-determination as envisaged in the charter of the United Nations Organization.

The Christian Union wishes to declare, in unequivocal terms, that they denounce the partition plan, being of the strong conviction that this plan involves a violation of the sacredness of the Holy Land which, by its nature and history, is indivisible and represents an encroachment on the natural rights of the Arabs, the people of the country.

The Christian Union wishes further to declare that any attempt to enforce the erroneous policy by force will inevitably be doomed to failure, for "right" is a stronger weapon than "might."

In view of our close contact with the various classes of our communities, we deem it our duty to draw the attention of all responsible authorities to the fact that the Christian Community in Palestine of all denominations is in complete agreement, in principle and deed,

with their Moslem Brethren in their endeavour to resist and ward off any violation of their rights or any encroachment on their country.

We, therefore, appeal to all those in power and authority to make their best endeavours for the restoration of peace and tranquility to the Holy Land by revoking the partition plan, ensuring the unity of Palestine and promoting the welfare and prosperity of all its people.

Jerusalem, the 3rd. of March in the year of our Lord 1948.



Archimandrite Theodorite
Representative of the
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate



Rev. ...
Representative of the
Latin Patriarchate



Father Souren Khushdjian
Representative of the
Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate



Archbishop ...
Representative of the
Melkite Patriarchate



Rev. H. L. Stanton
Representative of the
Coptic Patriarchate



Mgr. ...
Representative of the
Armenian Catholic Patriarchate



Rev. Boutros S. Ghaly
Representative of the
Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate

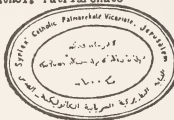


F. Bonaventura ...
Representative of the
Custodia di Terra Santa

Mgr. Ephrem Haddad
Vicer of the Syrian
Cathol. Patriarchate

M. A. Cubin (Rev.)
Chairman of the Arab
Evangelical Episc. Community

CHAIRMAN
THE ARAB EVANGELICAL EPISCOPAL COMMUNITY
IN PALESTINE & TRANS-JORDAN



Shedad Badreddin
Representative of the Arab
Lutheran Community